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OCI No. 2859/63

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
24 September 1963

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Significant Developments in the Latin
American Countries on the Counterin-
surgency Critical List

A. Countries on the Critical List

1. Colombia

A joint Army - Air Force operation against guerrillas on 16 September resulted in the death of a guerrilla leader and 16 of his group, the rescue of a wealthy landowner who had been kidnapped, and the capture of small arms and a quantity of subversive literature.

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Bandit raids, apparently without political connotations, have continued in other parts of Colombia.

2. Venezuela

During the period 15-20 September, there were 12 major incidents--five against US-owned enterprises.

On 22 September, two police officers in Caracas defected to the terrorist Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN), taking with them 72 rifles, 12 machineguns, and a supply of ammunition.

On 23 September, a ten-pound bomb was found at the USIS Information Center in Maracaibo. ~~US~~ *Venezuelan* experts claim that if the bomb had exploded it would have leveled the building.

DIA review(s) completed.

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B. Other Countries

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2. Honduras-Nicaragua

On 22 September Colonel Oswaldo Lopez, Chief of the Honduran Armed Forces, told the US army attaché that the majority of the Honduran troops in the Patuca River area would be withdrawn and sent to their normal posts by 26 September.

If the withdrawal proceeds as planned, there will be no further need for the three US Army helicopters presently assigned to Honduras for logistical support of counterinsurgency operations. The helicopters, which are now based at Catacamas, will be removed from Honduras on 27 September.

The troops had been sent to the Honduran-Nicaraguan border area to destroy pro-Castro guerrilla camps allegedly located along the Patuca River. No contact has been made between the Honduran military and the guerrillas, although the Honduran Air Force bombed two locations suspected of being insurgent camps. The jungle cover is so dense in the area that the US army attaché, flying at an altitude of 1,000 feet, could see ground only at the water's edge. Colonel Lopez said that two small detachments of 15-20 men each would remain on the river for surveillance purposes. He believes that about 100 guerrillas were in the area at one time, but that they have all exfiltrated into Nicaragua. (MAP)

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3. Peru

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Communist agitators are continuing to incite the Andean Indians to resettle on privately owned land in Peru's central valley. The move is designed to embarrass the new government, which is attempting to speed up the passage of an agrarian reform bill. Government efforts to dissuade the Indians from being taken in by Communist blandishments have thus far been largely unsuccessful.

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